

# Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

## MEETING MINUTES

Monday,

June 8, 2020

11:30 a.m. (Virtual)

**Commissioners and Staff present (Via telephone/Virtual):** David Armenti; Timothy Baker; Iris Barnes; Simone Barrett; DeNeen Brown; Charles Chavis; Nicholas Creary; Omar Eaton-Martinez; David Fakunle; Kirkland Hall; Elizabeth Hughes; Elgin Klugh; Gary Norman; Marshall Stevenson; Tamara Wilson; Will Schwarz; Zenita Hurley; Kristin McFarlane; Maya Davis; Sonya Osei; Chris Haley

**Absent:** Roger Davidson; Carl Snowden (Excused Absence)

**Members of the public present:** Jaylen Sanders;

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**Call to Order:** Chair Fakunle called the meeting to order at approximately 11: 35 A.M. Ms. Osei called the role of Commissioners. Members of the public introduced themselves for the record.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes for the May 11th, 2020 Commission meeting were considered and approved with discussion and revisions.

The minutes for the May 11, 2020 CLOSED Commission meeting were considered and approved with discussion and revisions.

The minutes for the May 2nd, 2020 Commission meeting were considered and approved with discussion and revisions.

### **Public Comments: n/a**

### **Current Events Comments and Updates-**

**Chair Fakunle-** Made statements regarding the recent lynching of George Floyd. The need and goals of the commission were reiterated and a discussion of the importance of how MD LTRC can help fight racial and social injustice through our mission and purpose.

**Vice Chair Chavis-** Encourages everyone to remain encouraged and support the efforts of MD LTRC. There was discussion regarding participation in national and statewide initiatives centered around racial and social justice reform.

**Commissioner Brown-** Encourages the commission to put out a statement regarding the recent lynchings and actions of police brutality. The commission has a great voice to be heard. People are looking for a voice and would be beneficial to hear from MD LTRC as a united front.

**Commissioner Barrett-** Wants to ensure that the commission includes women who have succumb to police brutality killings such as Breonna Taylor. Commissioner Fakunle wants to ensure that the commission has a solid foundation and platform to honor all the lives that been lost due to systemic racism in alignment with our focus of racial terror lynching.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: Jaylen Sanders-** What are some of the things that the commission can do and information being shared about violence and evidence of police brutality during protests? What can be done to protect these people protesting?

**-ANSWER Vice Chair Chavis-** Legislation needs to be passed in order to help protect these victims. These are cases where footage is provided. There can be recommendations for legislation to help protect whistle blowers/truth tellers that attend protests.

**Chair Fakunle-** That can be included in our tasks. Our charge as MD LTRC is to chronologically organize racial terror lynching that occurred between 1854-1933 in Maryland. With our platform, we want to cover ground on several aspects. As things are revealed, we will continue to address, make charges, and recommendations that will aid in encouraging reform. We want to focus on the history of this movement, and we want to make sure we can recommend and provide information and resources.

**Commissioner Eaton-Martinez-** There are county coalitions who can also focus on additional protections and provisions for whistle blowers and others that attend protests. For example, the Prince George's County Coalition can be a point of contact that can assist with answers to your question. There is a historic charge and ability to springboard the past, connect it to the present, and educate and pass laws for the future.

**Chris Haley-** Facebook Live EVENT 6/8/2020 from 2-3pm. Senator Ben Cardin- **Ending Systemic Racism in Law Enforcement- Live Stream**, along with Hillary Shelton- Director NAACP Washington Bureau and Marc Morial President and CEO of National Urban League

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Logistics' Committee: Commissioner T. Baker**

- Last subcommittee meeting was held 5/27/2020.
- During this meeting, an adjusted hearing template was created based on received feedback from the commission, public, and coalition groups. This template has been finalized and is being presented to the commission for consideration for approval before updating MD LTRC website.

- Ms. Davis is working with MD State Archives IT consultant to create and secure a “Resource uploader”. This tool will allow commissioners and members of the public to have a means to upload, inventory, and catalogue documents. This platform will help MD LTRC to catalog, preserve, and allow information to be shared adequately.
- Submitters will request to submit a resource; they will need to include essential information such as- email address, description of item (manuscripts, diaries, journals, etc.), and further explain what type of documents are being uploaded.
- There will be required fields. There is a statement included which explains the purpose of collecting the material. The purpose of this materials is to assist in building archived information to recognize the 40 victims who were lynched in Maryland.
- (Ms. Davis will send included statement after meeting for review and suggestions.)
- There is a total of 10 documents maximum at a time for upload.
- There will be a security screen and process online before uploading documents to help vet robots and remove any explicit information. All information will be vetted before uploading to portal. There will be an encrypted password to submit information. A confirmation receipt will be sent once submission process is complete.
- Individuals will be able to submit resources such as newspapers, photos, reports, research files, 3D artifacts (different submission process, letter, etc.)
- Submitters must have google (Gmail account) to upload information. If they do not, other arrangements will be made.
- Approval was requested to move forward with website development and Resource Uploader application. **GRANTED**
- Motion to move forward adopt the hearing template document circulated to be used as guidance document in scheduling hearings in the future. Second Commissioner Norman **MOVED.**

#### **Research Committee: Commissioner Klugh**

- The subcommittee discussed the importance of establishing a document intake infrastructure which is essential when reaching out to local coalitions for archived information. The Resource Uploader portal is essential for the research committee. This will also help provide additional information to repositories when asking for archived information.
- **Update-** Ms. Davis and Commissioner Chavis will spearhead disseminating Inventory communications out to local repositories. The commission would like to notate what information each repository has. John Hopkins, NAVs Center, etc.
- Now that online portal is established, subcommittee will meet to create strategy of approach for getting information from repositories.
- It was suggested to confirm all races/ethnicities before submitting documentation for the vetting process. We must identify races and speak to the racial terror lynching.

#### **Reconciliation and Justice Committee: Commissioner Chavis**

- The subcommittee is focusing on working with descendants of known victims. There will be a scheduled phone call with one family member of a victim (names withheld for privacy reasons at this time) either June 15 or 17, 2020.
- The main focus is to identify relatives and descendants of victims to hear their voice, and document historical trauma that was experienced.

### **Will Schwarz- Presentation on Liaison**

- The document shared explains the need and want to establish relationships with county coalitions.
- The goal is to assign two commissioners to each county and public hearing in each area to also help maintain relationships with local coalitions, residents, and other affiliates in those areas. Commissioners will serve as designees in each area.
- 9 pairings among 18 commissioners. Two counties per pair of commissioners.

### **Assigning of MD Counties to Commissioners**

- Somerset- Commissioner Stevenson; Commissioner Hall
- Lower Eastern Shore- Commissioner Chavis; Commissioner Hughes
- Upper Eastern Shore- Commissioner Brown; Commissioner D. Baker
- Baltimore/Harford/Cecil- Commissioner Barnes; Commissioner Norman,
- Carroll/Frederick-Commissioner Creary; Commissioner Armenti
- Prince George's- Commissioner Barrett; Commissioner Eaton-Martinez
- Arundel- Commissioner Wilson; Commissioner Snowden
- Howard and Montgomery- Commissioner T. Baker; Commissioner Klugh
- Allegany/Southern MD (Calvert and St. Mary's) – Commissioner Fakunle; Commissioner Davidson

### **Sarah Hedlund- Racial Terror Lynching in Montgomery County Presentation**

- Ms. Sarah Hedlund, an Archivist and Librarian at the Montgomery County Historical Society, provided a detailed presentation on the lynchings of George Peck (1880), John Diggs-Dorsey (1880) and Sidney Randolph (1896) notating research processes conducted at the Montgomery County Historical Society.
- Commissioner Chavis, Creary, and Fakunle expressed gratitude towards Ms. Hedlund's presentation and for the extensive work done within the Montgomery County Historical
- Access to these stories are available at <https://montgomeryhistory.org/lynchings-in-montgomery-county/>

- Talks in July 2020- Montgomery History Weekly will host weekly talks held via virtual Zoom platform. The event is advertised and can be found <https://montgomeryhistory.org/mhconnected/Adevertized> on website <https://montgomeryhistory.org/mhconnected/>

### **New Business**

**n/a**

### **Announcements**

- **Mondays in June 2020** - Commissioner Chavis is hosting weekly zoom calls with historical figures across the county. Participants are able to register via Eventbrite. 6/8/2020 MSNBC at 6pm. (link will be shared with Commission)
- **Commissioner Eaton-Martinez-** Juneteenth celebration online- Virtual event. Online panel, Commissioner Chavis is a member on this panel, along with chief park police member, and others. Commissioner Eaton-Martinez moderating. June 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm (link will be shared with Commission)
- Letters have been sent out to local coalitions and affiliates on behalf of MD LTRC regarding our mission work and possible collaboration. Please submit any additional historical societies that need to be contacted.
- It was suggested to connect the representatives from local coalitions with commissioners assigned to that area.

### **Comments from the Public**

N/A

**Update:** Reschedule closed meeting for review of policies and law. Table closed meeting until July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 MD LTRC.

Adjourned: 1:16 p.m.